

Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club

Newsletter

April 2000

Founded 1888

This month's articles

- [Survey shows members prefer "Wheelmen" 2 to 1](#)
- [Daffodil Classic Sunday, April 16 in Orting](#)
- [Scott Pierson honored for bicycle advocacy](#)
- [Do we need helmet laws?](#)
- [Around the world report](#)
- [From the president's desk](#)
- [Members](#)
- [Ride notes](#)
- [Bike Expo a success for TWBC](#)
- [Want Ads](#)
- [Children influence helmet wear](#)

Daffodil Classic Sunday, April 16 in Orting

Jan Brame

Co-coordinator Daffodil Classic Ride

This year's Daffodil Classic will be a very special event. The club and participants will celebrate 25 years of one of the best bicycle rides in the Northwest with music, booths and a special treat at the finish in Orting Park.

Registration is now at the school, not in the park! Riders can also carbo-load at the Orting Cooperative Nursery School's great pancake breakfast before the ride. After the ride the Lion's Club will grill hamburgers as they do every year.

This will be one of the best rides, ever.

But to make it successful, club members are needed to pitch in and help. Volunteers are being signed up now. For a little work volunteers ride free and get a great shirt.

This year's shirt is a Henley shirt in dark navy blue. It is embroidered with the 25-year logo on the breast. It looks great!

Call Kent Wienker, volunteer coordinator, at 253-752-0764 or e-mail to daffodil@twbc.org. It's a great way to meet other club members who ride at different codes and a great way to help your club and community.

We hope to see everyone there, rain or shine!

Scott Pierson honored for bicycle advocacy

TWBC member, Scott Pierson, was one of three recipients of an award from the Bicycle Alliance of Washington at the Bike Bash in Seattle on Feb. 18. Scott received a plaque in recognition of his contribution to improving bicycling in Tacoma and his involvement in statewide issues. Scott also has adopted a bicycle lifestyle and uses his bicycle as his main form of transportation.

The two other recipients this year included Mike Viles, from the Vancouver Bicycle Club, and the organization, Bikes Work of Seattle. Previous Pierce County recipients of the prestigious Bicycle Alliance award include Ben Yazici, University Place Public Works Director, and Carla Gramlich, TWBC member and activist. Our congratulations and appreciation to Scott and the other award recipients for helping to make Washington more bike-friendly

Do we need helmet laws?

Dave Tison TWBC Safety & Education Coordinator Do we need another club rule or law to tell us what we should do? It depends on your perspective. Isn't it common sense that we all should wear a helmet while bicycling?

For some it is. For others, a rule or law requiring bicyclists to wear a helmet is an infringement of their freedom of choice. Ultimately, it is up to each of us to decide to

ride with or without a helmet. But when we ride with the Tacoma Wheelmen Bicycle Club, we represent the club.

You may think you are just out for a recreational ride with fellow cyclists, but to the non-cycling community we are seen as representative of all bicyclists. Blow a stop sign or traffic light, ride on the sidewalk and scare a dog or small child as you fly past, ride without a helmet — your actions reflect on all cyclists.

The TWBC is a huge supporter of bicycle safety through our financial support and many volunteer man hours for programs, such as Helmets on Wheels and Sprocket Person.

As such, I think it is time we not only "talk the talk, but also walk the walk." I think it is time that the club adopts a formal policy requiring helmets for riders on all club rides. Everyone already wears a helmet so why is this even an issue?

For at least two reasons:

- It shows that TWBC members practice what we preach. When we ask a city council to adopt a helmet law for their community how can we expect them to do what we have not done as a club.
- It lends support to a ride leader on the rare occasion when a rider shows up for a TWBC ride without a helmet. I propose that we formalize what is already TWBC practice. Make helmets required for participation in TWBC rides.

Survey shows members prefer 'Wheelmen' 2 to 1

Dorian Smith

Though the name of the club has included "Wheelmen" since it was founded in 1888, the decision has been fraught with debate.

Club President Steve Brown presented a 110-year synopsis of the club's name at the annual banquet in January. It seems that from the beginning, the members – like bureaucrats who love reorganization – have altered, rephrased, re-emphasized and shifted the club's title. Even in the early 1970s when it awoke from the long automobile winter, the club's name was rewritten a few times until it settled on Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club.

Past issues affecting the club's name included racing or mountain bicycling, family rides or long trips, intense lobbying or political neutrality. Those debates helped the club define itself and focus its purpose.

Now the debate over the club's name is embracing the issue of gender politics. Several club members have objected to the term "Wheelmen." They believe it is one of the many nouns that implies sexism and should be replaced, like fireman (now firefighter) or policeman (now police officer) or League of American Wheelmen (now League of American Bicyclists).

For several months a survey was conducted on the club's name. Members were asked to vote on whether the name should be changed. Opinions were also solicited.

By mid-March there were 44 votes – roughly 12 percent of the membership. Two-thirds of the voters said the club's name should not change, primarily for the sake of tradition. The minority one-third believed it was time to select a non-gender-specific name.

Here is a sampling of comments:

Comments opposing a name change:

- "Look at the Ironman event, none of my female friends would ever think of changing that to Ironperson. Sometimes tradition just has to win out!!"

- “The word “Wheelman/men” is a classic remembrance of a time when bicycles nearly ruled American popular culture and defined the last decade of the 19th century . . . and in our fast-paced and technologically defined local culture it stands for a solid respect and understanding of history. If we forget where we come from, I fear greatly where we go.”
- “I guess I don’t understand, you want to change the name to Tacoma another Bicycle Club? That is so weird.”
- (A non-member) “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it. There’s a long, proud tradition in the word, ‘...Wheelmen.... I think that maintaining the name as it is, will continue to salute the bicyclists that formed the club so long ago.”
- “The league of wheelmen is a old and proud name. When i am looking through a list of clubs this name stands out first.”
- “I am a die-hard feminist old enough to remember my participation in the ERA struggles, abortion rights lobbying and many right to work efforts. Only by a genuine stretch of paranoia could a case be made that the name of this club need be embroiled in sexual politics. If there are people who would not join the club because of the name, I say: ‘Shame on them. They didn’t do sufficient research to know that the club is, in my opinion, a very egalitarian organization dedicated to bicycling for both fun and pain for all.”
- “If there is some substantial barrier obtaining funding or being heard politically in lobbying, I would reconsider my stand. In which case I think it important to have a locator (Pierce Co., Tacoma, Rainier, Tahoma..) as part of the name. Keep in mind branding is a very critical element, especially in lobbying, and a name change means starting all over again in gaining name familiarity. It is not something to do lightly - it is not something to do at all unless there is a major reason to do so.”

- “The name of the club will not make or break the club. The functions and objectives of the club will.”
- “Focus on enjoyment while riding and most of the membership will enjoy themselves. You can’t please everyone. Please don’t try.”
- “I think the name should remain the same because of tradition.”
- “It’s a traditional bike club name...and I am old :-)”
- “Keep the name, change the logo”
- “There is a very long history to the name and a recognizable identity that goes with it.”
- “I think it has a historic flavor to the present name. If this is feminist issue should you not change the name of the “biker babes” to the “biker persons”? I’m sure there are plenty of bland names available for the club which will offend no one at the expense of tradition. Maybe Cascade Bicycle Club South?”
- I don’t think it needs to be changed. A name doesn’t necessarily reflect an attitude. I have never experienced a ‘sexist and exclusionary’ attitude as a female club member. All the members I have met on rides-male and female-have been friendly, encouraging—and fun to ride with.”
- “As a female member related to me on a club ride, “don’t they realize that men is a part of women plural and not sexist.” Most individuals that joined in the past, coming from other cities or states never even considered it to be a men’s only club. All it takes is a phone call.”
- “Historic name recognition overrides any other reason. If we want to reflect the area-wide nature of the club, change it to the Pierce County Pedalers.”

- “This name ‘Wheelmen’ has a long and proud history and I think it should be preserved. I don’t think a name change would result in more or fewer members.”
- “Tradition. It’s a good name as it is. Name changes communicate a lack of certainty about who and what you are. (I am responding because I believe TWBC is probably the organization that my father belonged to during and after WWI, when he rode a ‘wheel’)”

Comments in favor of a name change:

- “ ‘Wheelman’ sounds archaic and old-fashioned. I would imagine women would not be encouraged by the name either. ‘Tacoma Bicycle Club’ sounds more natural, more intuitive, and is a touch shorter.”
- “Something that is politically correct to include the women as women are as big a part of our organization as us men!”
- “So women do not think it is a men’s organization only.”
- “Tacoma Wheelmen portrays an all male organization.”
- “As much fun as it is to be a part of a club with such a history, the significance of this fact is lost in the obscurity of the antiquated term ‘Wheelmen’.”
- “I’m not strongly opinionated on this (it seems like a small concern in the grander scheme of things) but if it offends some people to be called a wheelMAN, then why not change the name slightly?”
- “Needs to be more inclusive of the entire membership. Also might help attract new members who view us as a male only club.”
- “It is exclusionary and sexist”

- “To me, the word wheelmen denotes a sense of masculinity and/or advanced stages of cycling ability. If others share my opinion, they may be hesitant to join the club or participate in rides.”

- “Get rid of the ‘MEN’ It’s the socially and politically correct thing to do. New name could attract new members. Take a look at surrounding bike club’s names: Capitol, Cascade, Redmond, etc.

No ‘Men’ is mentioned. League of Wheelmen has been changed to remove the ‘Men’. The only ‘Men’ club I can think of is Portland, Oregon and they are a very active club (lots of activities) and probably do not need a ‘shot in the arm’ to encourage participation. The League of Wheelmen’s changed their name to reflect the current membership. I think it is about time the TWBC changed their name to reflect our mission and membership.”

- “Saddle-sore Law-abiding Upright Riders of Puget Sound (SLURPS) Reasons: Because no-one in the club rides recumbents (at least that I know of) :-)”

- “Change name to: Tacoma Wheelers. The club's identity (name) should be inclusive, as is its membership. Otherwise, the use of ‘Wheelmen’ defines both men and women by the singular universal use of ‘men.’ This smacks of inequality and perpetuates the myth that participation in sports is, by nature and culture, an exclusively male domain. The passive acceptance of this assumption through language is a reality, and the club should move to break that passivity. The name change should reflect our contemporary beliefs and values while still celebrating the history of the organization.”

- “The Tacoma Bicycle Club. Hey, let's get politically correct and get it over with.”

Suggested new names for the club

Tacoma Bicycle Club

Tacoma Wheelers

Tacoma Cyclists

Tacoma Washington Bicycle Club
Tacoma Wheelers Bicycle Club
Mount Tahoma Bicycle Club
Tacoma Velo Club
Saddle Sore Law Abiding Riders of Puget Sound (SLURPS)
Pierce County Pedalers
Cascade Bicycle Club South

Members

New: Mary Jo Willette, Carolyn Aoki-Lale, Paul Casade Vall, Jim Eanes, Jud N. Bruton, Jerry M. Barrett, Rod Giffels, (Kathleen) Kathie Stork, Robert B. Taub

Renewing members: John Kiner, Dave Tison, Carol Nichols, Stephen Mauer, Edward JosBerger, Louis W. Boitano, Tom Shirley, Ken and Mary Neukom, Steve Merriam, Reggie Tison, Dave Sinclair, Chris Seykota-Smith, Tony Picardo, Janice Sack-Ory and Richard Ory, Sondra G. Johnston, Noel Hagens, Bob and Anne Buhler, Bill Newman

Want Ads

For Sale

Specialized Rockhopper mountain bike in good to excellent condition. Candy apple red. Rigid chrome moly double butted Specialized frame (16 inch). Shimano Deore XT derrailleurs/shifters (index)/brakes. Sun Tour crankset. Eighteen speed. Great for gravel roads, commuting or mellow single track. Comes with many extras- rear rack, fenders, extra set of knobby tires (new), bar ends & grips. \$250. Call Nancy or Rick 360-893-6649.

Cross Country ski boots. Fits BNN binding. Womens size eight. Asolo brand, all leather. Very sturdy with good support. Used 5-6 times. Excellent condition. \$100. Call Nancy or Rick 360-893-6649.

Riding partner wanted

I have been out of biking due to back problems but now I have been working out and I am doing better and want to return on regular basis. I want to ride with someone on regular basis who lives near me. Because I am literally starting over, I would need someone maybe just beginning or has had an injury. I have ridden two STPs so I am not a featherweight, just need to build confidence again. I have no idea how far I can go this year but I need to feel safe riding. Karen L'Allier 253-759-1112

Pedals wanted

At the March general meeting, a new member who has an old 10-speed and not a lot of money, picked toe clips in the door prize drawing. But his pedals won't accept toe clips. If anyone has a spare set of pedals to donate to him, please bring them to the April meeting.

Children's influence on helmets

Carla Gramlich

Over the years Helmets on Wheels with the help of TWBC members have helped provide inexpensive custom-fit helmets to thousands of Pierce County children and adults. Despite this tremendous effort, many cyclists still ride without helmets.

Helmets on Wheels will continue to support helmet sales and promote wearing them. Volunteers in the program spent an evening painting the "Be Head Smart, Wear a Helmet" on the Foothills Trail. Other communities are being asked to paint this slogan on trails.

The City of Tacoma has offered to post the slogan on the bike lane signs. The program will produce small signs for the city to install. Other communities with bike lane signs are considering this option.

But attitudes don't change overnight. Change takes a generation. More adults are influenced by children who wear helmets. Hopefully, the signage program will encourage more riders.

From the President's Desk

Steve Brown

Ode to the mildest winter I can remember. I long for the day I can wake up and go bicycling on the nice days and sleep in on the rainy ones — retirement. In the meantime, I have to wait for Daylight Savings Time so I can ride in the evenings after work.

I was pleased to see a couple new ride leaders listed in the calendar this year. Speaking of leadership, it is not too early to consider running for a TWBC board position.

Come to the next board meeting and find out more. The board meeting is April 4, 7 p.m. at the downtown Tacoma Library, 1102 Tacoma Ave. S. Join me before the meeting at Once Teriyaki restaurant across the street.

Around the world report

Club member Bob Warfield is bicycling around the world on the Odyssey2000 tour. This report was dispatched by e-mail after crossing the Andes in South America.

Bob Warfield

I'm pulling brakes to slow my descent. I cannot get enough of this place. Obscured in rain and cloud, its steaming mists wind rake over abrupt thickly forested hills and steep mossy basalt scarps and begin to come apart. Huge tropical ferns lurch over the road from their dripping green purchase. I pass another chorus of frogs serenading their damp designs before daylight enlarges view and hills roll away toward open scapes with nature's yield to human accommodations, modest habitat

and husbandry dotting the vast intimacy of this final corner of Chile before we begin our climb over the Andes and into Argentina.

If you can, re-mortgage your home, recall that commitment to your kid's college or career, steal your grandmother's kitchen money, buy a ticket to Chile and see Puyehue, the Parque Nacional will live in your dreams. Somewhere up here, Albert Bierstadt is at his easel still, captivated by vistas uncharted on his canvas of the fantastic. Even Disney's artists would gain imagination from the quiets and roars, sunsets and soaring aspects of this wild paradise.

It rained hard last night. Parts of hills are sloughing layers of pumice and dark chocolate sand into our path, sliding and tumbling rooted communities of bamboo and fern down to reorient their industry unfazed. On we climb and soon tall forest relics, long dead, branches bearded with silvery green moss, begin to sentinel our march.

Immigration controls are passed, and we ascend into the odd margin between two nations: 23 km of well-designed road in Chile, followed by 26 km of often dicey dirt and gravel from the sudden crest of our Andes crown.

The summit of our crossing is marked by a "Welcome to Chile," large cross and statue of Mary, and International Rotary monument. Guarding our endeavor are two Tim Kneeland and Associates staff in a van and the remnants of sustenance, "Skippy" peanut butter and jam in plastic pouches, the ordinary and universal muffins we've dubbed "hockey pucks," and a couple of cans of raisins. It is raining and cold. Ahead is a torturous descent into Argentina.

But before us, rising into snow-laden clouds, are the Andes — looming close in a sudden, dramatic, forbidding and virgin kingdom of inhospitable glory.

Perhaps nowhere else on Earth does a geographic land boundary more closely match and mark a political one. We are coming into a very different place, eager to

learn what it will reveal in the brief miles and days we may enjoy before once more marshalling ingenuity and patience to board another charter airplane - this time bound for South Africa.

Ride notes

California wine country: Mostly for women, a little spring break is being planned the first week of April. From a motel base camp, the group will tour Napa and possibly the Sonoma wine regions which are listed in Adventurevelo.com. Carpooling is planned (one long day). Contact Carol Davis at 253-857-5396.

Galloping Goose Bike Trail: On Memorial Day weekend, a beautiful 2A (no hills) ride will leave Port Angeles by ferry to Victoria, B.C. and the town of Sooke. This 90-mile ride will cover three days two nights, staying in beautiful bed and breakfasts. From Victoria the trip winds along a "Rails to Trails" trail (mountain or cross bikes required). The 30-mile first day to the town of Sooke. On the second day riders can ride through Pot Holes Provincial Park or walk around the small town of Sooke. On the final day the group will return and stroll around Victoria. Two ferries home to choose from. Information call Scott Kubiszewski at 253-383-2588.

RAGBRAI XXVIII. Join 10,000 cyclists July 23-29 for the Des Moines Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa. This is a unique ride that includes church picnics, homemade ice cream on rhubarb pie, music and dancing, rural hospitality and outrageous costumes (helmets are required, but not much else). Also included is a 449 mile ride across southern Iowa (the hilly part) on good roads with virtually no traffic. See <http://www.ragbrai.org> or call Anne Heller at 253-761-0709 for more information.

Ghost Towns and Old Fossils. Last May a number of Wheelmen took a Memorial Weekend break from cycling to do a backpacking trip along Lake Chelan into the tiny town of Stehekin. This year small towns are still the ticket, but cycling will be the mode of transportation. Join Steve Brown and Carla Gramlich on a 3-day cycling

adventure in north central Oregon. It starts in The Dalles on the Columbia River and with overnights in Condon and Shaniko, Oregon. This will be a self-contained credit card trip over hilly terrain, logging 65-80 miles per day. Five rooms have been reserved at the Shaniko Hotel until April 15. For more information call Steve Brown at 253-752-4038. Ghost Towns include Condon, Antelope (remember the Rajneesh?) and Shaniko. And, of course, there will be plenty of old fossils (which has nothing to do with the people going on the trip).

A ride is being organized leaving June 5 or 6 and taking the **northern route to Minot, N.D.** It will consist of wilderness camping (no camp grounds) with a few motel stops. Daily travel distance will average 80 miles. Anyone interested contact Ron Menge at 253-845-8496
Riders' essentials: All bicycle riders are urged to wear a helmet, carry repair items — such as spare inner tubes — and first aid supplies on every ride.

Letter to the editor

Restoring historic Water Ditch Trail

Dear Editor:

I was just curious about the status of restoring the historic City Water Ditch Trail, which I learned about in a News Tribune "Letter to the Editor" from one of your members a couple of years ago. Do the new lights in South Park have anything to do with that? Also, I was glad to see the city include bike lanes in the upgrade of South 96th Street between Yakima Avenue and Hosmer Street.

Hopefully, they'll do the same on McKinley Avenue south of East 72nd Street.
Thanks for your attention.

Kevin Gilmore. *The City has a \$50,000 grant to study the trail. Not much has been accomplished in the Public Works Department. The Water Utility is not completely*

opposed to the idea. They want to make sure none of their facilities are impacted adversely and that some responsible agency agrees to be liable for any injuries. On a sad note, they are considering selling the most primitive, park like feature of the trail running from near South 74th St. to the Homestead Restaurant on South Tacoma Way. They would sell it to some developer. I have been disappointed by both the Public Works Department as well as the Water Utility.

Bob Myrick

Director of Gov't and Community Relations

Bike Expo a success for TWBC

The Tacoma Wheelmen's booth was a success, co-coordinator Peggy reported. More than a thousand entry forms for the three TWBC rides were handed out. The club also handed out more than 500 entry forms for the Tour de Pierce and TWBC newsletters. The booth also ran out of maps of Pierce County cycling routes. Nearly two dozen people signed up for rides and memberships.

Club meeting features safety talk

Estelle Gray, co-owner of R+E Cycles in Seattle, made a return performance at the Tacoma Wheelmen's membership meeting Feb. 15. She talked about effective cycling and proper bicycle fitting and captivated the audience with her speedy demonstration of removing and re-installing a flat rear wheel.

The April 18 meeting will focus on safe cycling, featuring a video. Correct riding techniques that help avoid accidents will be reviewed. The meeting starts at 7 p.m. and is held at the South Park Community Center, 4815 S. Tacoma Way, in Tacoma. For more information call Steve Brown at 253-752-4038 or the hall at 253-591-5299.